

MASTERS OF HEALING

—TONI SCHMID

I

A set of twelve scrolls illustrating the Art of Healing used to be exposed in the fourth hall of the Yung-ho-kung temple of Peking.¹ Two copies of the set reached the West 1938.² One copy is now in the possession of the University of California; it is complete. The other copy is kept in the Ethnographical Museum of Stockholm; two scrolls are missing. The Californian copy was recently reproduced by Bayer, Leverkusen, in colours, and with an introduction by Ilza Veith.³

Some months ago I had the opportunity to visit the Yung-ho-kung temple of Peking. The hall of the sMan-bla or Medicine-Buddha seemed intact and well kept. There was a set of scrolls of the same pattern but containing only ten scrolls. They were not in good condition.

The scrolls display the human body and its anatomy as well as a number of instruments used in surgical operations. In addition they show medicinal plants and foodstuffs, also the way in which they are prepared. There are pictures of cows being milked, butter being churned, curd and cheese being prepared. Each item is provided with an inscription in Tibetan.

At the top of two scrolls, III and VI in Bayer's edition, are rows of holy personages, designed as such by the nimbus around each head. These two scrolls could not be found in Peking.

Already (1910) one scroll practically identical with number III of our set had been published by E. H. C. Walsh who called it an "anatomical chart".⁴ He could consult a Tibetan physician then resident in Darjeeling about it. This physician came from the medical college on the lCags-po-ri near Lhasa. From him Walsh learnt that the original of the chart was the one used in the lCags-po-ri lamasery, and that the students were permitted to have copies made.

Consequently the material now mentioned consists of copies only. As the ICags-po-ri lamasery is said to have been destroyed there is not much hope ever to get access to any original.

Several questions present themselves. When was the original executed? Was the whole set executed at the same time? Where and for whom was the set made? What can we learn about the tradition it represents?

If we compare Walsh's chart with our number III the whole lay-out as well as most details are exactly the same. Some differences exist. The seat of the most conspicuous person, for instance, is much more elaborate in the chart. The backing is similar to some backings in the series of Dalai Lamas and former incarnations of Avalokitesvara in the Ethnographical Museum of Stockholm. Inscriptions, too, show differences so the chart has—correctly—"chad" (measure) while the copy from Peking has "chan". Details in the subscriptions and iconographical details will be dealt with later on. On the whole the chart seems to preserve pictures and inscriptions closer to the original than the copies from Peking. Possibly the chart was copied directly from the original. The Peking Copies were, at best, a copy of a copy.

Twenty four holy men are painted at the top of the two scrolls, twelve in each row. There are no gods or goddesses or other females among them. Each person is provided with an inscription. In the order of the Tibetan alphabet these inscriptions are :

1. skyes pa che 'bum 'chi gsos gco རྗེས་པ་ཚེ་འབུམ་འཛེ་གསོལ་གཙོ་
2. khra chan blo mchog rdo rje zabs བླ་མ་ཚོ་མོ་གཞི་རྩེ་ཞབས་
3. mkhan chen sakya dban phyug zabs མཁས་པའི་སྤྱུག་དབང་ཕུ་ག་ཞབས་
4. mkhas mchog bsod nams rgyal po'i mchan མཁས་པ་མ་ག་
བསོད་ནམས་རྒྱལ་པོའི་མཚན་
5. mkhas dban byar po panchen zabs མཁས་པ་དབང་ཕུར་པོ་པའི་ཚེ་ཞབས་
6. gans can mgon gcig thams cad mkhyen གངས་ཅན་གཅིག་གི་ཐམས་ཅད་མཁྱེན་
7. gas 'jin yun bzan dban po'i zabs གཤམ་འཇིགས་ལུན་བཟང་པོའི་ཞབས་
8. glin stod blo bzan rgya mcho'i dpal ལྷོ་སྟོད་བློ་བཟང་རྒྱལ་མཚོའི་དཔལ་
9. snags chan bsod nams rgyal mchan zabs རྒྱལ་མཚོ་ཞབས་

10. nams rtogs mna' ba sman sgom pa རྩམས་རྫོགས་མངའ་བ་སྐྱེན་སྐྱེས་པ་
11. bstan pa'i bdag po sarbajanag° བརྟན་པའི་བདག་པོ་ཤར་རྩའ་གྲུག་
12. dran sron bstan 'jin rgyal po'i mchan དང་སྤོང་བརྟན་པའི་རྩའ་གྲུག་པོའི་མཚན་
13. dran sron bstan 'jin rgyal po'i zabs དང་སྤོང་བརྟན་པའི་རྩའ་གྲུག་པོའི་ལབ་པ་
14. sprul sku gter bdag glin pa'i zabs ལྷུ་སྐུ་གཏེར་བདག་གླིང་པའི་ལབ་པ་
15. byan nos mkhas dban dar rgyas zabs བྱང་སོམ་མཁམ་དབང་རྩའ་གྲུག་ལའབ་པ་
16. man thos zla ba'i dban po'i mchan མངའ་སྐོབ་སྐྱེས་པའི་དབང་པོའི་མཚན་
17. zur khar mnam nid rdo rje'i zabs ལུང་ཁར་མཉམ་ཉིད་རྫོང་ཇིའི་ལབ་པ་
18. zur mkhyen gzon nu don grub zabs ལུང་མཇེན་གཞིན་ལུང་རྩའ་གྲུག་ལའབ་པ་
19. zur chos dbyins sar grol ལུང་ཅེས་དཱིངས་སར་གྲོལ་
20. zur rigs 'jin nag dban phun chogs chogs mchan ལུང་རིགས་པའི་རྩའ་གྲུག་པོའི་མཚན་
21. rin sdins blo bzan rgya mcho'i dpal རིན་སྤིངས་བློ་བཟང་རྩའ་གྲུག་མཚོའི་དབུ་ལ་
22. rin sdins blo bzan rgyal po'i dpal རིན་སྤིངས་བློ་བཟང་རྩའ་གྲུག་པོའི་དབུ་ལ་
23. gsan chen bstan pa'i rgyal mchan zabs གསལ་ཅེས་བརྟན་པའི་རྩའ་གྲུག་མཚན་ལའབ་པ་
24. srid zi'i gcug can thams cad mkhyen སྤིང་ཟིའི་གཅུག་ཅན་མཚན་ཅད་མཇེན་

Also the backings of the seats in scroll H. 5755 in the same museum show this pattern.

In the two rows at the top of the scrolls they are distributed as follows:

chart and scroll III

- | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|----|----|----|----|----|---|----|---|---|----|----|---|
| 16 | 21 | 12 | 15 | 10 | 2 | 11 | 3 | 4 | 22 | 13 | 8 |
|----|----|----|----|----|---|----|---|---|----|----|---|

scroll VI

- | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|----|---|----|----|---|----|----|----|----|---|---|
| 7 | 19 | 6 | 18 | 23 | 9 | 20 | 14 | 24 | 17 | 1 | 5 |
|---|----|---|----|----|---|----|----|----|----|---|---|

The differences in the inscriptions between the chart and scroll III are: 2 has "rdo rje'i" instead of "rdo rje", 11 spells "sarvajna" (सर्वज्ञ) instead of "sarvajanag" (सर्वजानग) and 22 has "rgya mcho'i dpal" instead of "rgyal po'i dpal". The chart seems to have the better spelling.⁷

Iconographically there are but a few differences between the chart and scroll III: 11 the much more elaborate seat of the chart, 10 the mudra of the right hand, minor details of the dress for instance 3 and 21, the water jar behind 13 is much more like a water jar in the chart than in the scroll. Preference seems to be due to the chart.

As to the identification of the twenty-four persons the name alone is not always a safe guarantee. There may be several men known by the same name, there may be whole lines of incarnations with the same name reiterated. A life-story (rnam thar) would provide certainty. A title and the place from where he comes may make us reasonably sure.⁸

Two of them, 8 and 19, seem to be recorded in the annals called Re'u-mig.⁹ The first is said to have been born 1589. Glin-stod is one of the two lamaseries into which the older single lamasery Ne'u-thog was divided.¹⁰ The later, 19, is said to have lived 1603-1656. The name given in the annals is certainly the better: Chos-dbyins-ran-grol. "ran" may easily be mistaken for "sar" by a scribe. The former has no books in the chart but several books are seen behind him in the scroll. The later, 19, holds a book in his left hand.

A third name, 3, is found in the so called Blue Annals (Deb-ther snon-po). Here the man is said to have been the venerated teacher of the authour 'Gos-lo, and the pupil of Yon-tan sen-ge, sBa and Rag.¹¹ The chart and scroll III show him at the left side of the central figure. In the chart he is more fully dressed. The mudra is the same. He wears no headgear and carries no attribute.

We may find a fourth name, 17, among the eminent physicians enumerated by Sum-pa mkhan-po in a small chapter of his great work. The chapter is dedicated to the development of the medical science.¹² It is a man from Zur-khar. W. Filchner and W. A. Unkrig mention a lamasery Zur-mkhar in Mongolia famous for its medical studies.¹³ The lama carries no attribute.

A fifth name, 2, may be found in one of the rnam-thar brought from Tibet to Japan by the Japanese monk Ekai Kawaguchi.¹⁴ This person is sitting at the right side of the most conspicuous figure of the whole set, and he



FIG.1 (Scroll iii)



FIG.2 (Scroll vi)



FIG.3

is the only one wearing a red cap shaped like the yellow caps of the three personages with tables in front of them.

One would expect it an easy task to identify the three yellow-capped persons with a lotus and a table each. The white lotus is commonly carried by the bodhisattva Padmapani and his incarnations. The combination white-lotus-yellow-cap is usually the mark of a Dalai Lama who is considered an incarnation of Padmapani and belongs to the Yellow Church. The three pictures 6, 11, and 24 are very much alike, except that only 6 carries a book in his left hand. The subscribed names do, however, not correspond with the known names of Dalai Lamas. The last part of the subscriptions, thams cad mkhyen—sarvajna, is certainly in use for Dalai Lamas, though not exclusively. Even Buston is addressed as “all-knowing”.
(To be continued)

NOTES

1. Cf F. D. LESSING, Yung-ho-kung. REPORTS FROM THE SCIENTIFIC EXPEDITION TO THE NORTH—WESTERN PROVINCES OF CHINA UNDER THE LEADERSHIP OF DR. SVEN HEDIN. Publication 18. VIII. Ethnography 1. Stockholm 1942,20.
2. I am indebted to the curator, professor Gosta Montell, Stockholm, for this information.
3. ILZA VEITH, Medizin in Tibet. Bayer, Leverkusen. S.a.
4. E.H.C. WALSH, The Tibetan Anatomical System.—JOURNAL OF THE ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY. 1910, 1215 ff. passim. —The lama-physician was residing at the Ghoom lamasery near Darjeeling.
5. Cf T. SCHMID, Saviours of Mankind I. REPORTS FROM THE etc. PUBLICATION 45. Stockholm 1961.—Cf also the picture of the eighth Dalai Lama kept in the Ethnographical Museum, Stockholm.
6. thams cad mkhyen=sarvajna—all knowing.
7. There are differences in the text of the chart and scroll III too; so the chart has correctly “mchad”—measure, where the scroll spells “Mchan”.
8. Neither Walsh nor Veith have tried to identify the persons. Yet Walsh comments on the list. He translates each name. He tells of Rin-sdins as a lamasery near Gyantse. He points out the two lamas of Rin-sdins and the two dran-sron as persons belonging to two lines of incarnations.
9. JOURNAL OF THE ASIATIC SOCIETY OF BENGAL, LVIII, 1, 74.—Hein-rich Laufer has mentioned Glin-stod-blo-bzan-rgya-mcho'i-dpal; H. LAUFER, Beitrage zur Kenntnis der tibetischen Medizin. Berlin. 1900, 13.

10. Cf G. TUCCI, Tibetan Painted Scrolls.
11. ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY OF BENGAL. Monograph Series. Vol.VII. THE BLUE ANNALS, ed. by George N. Roerich. 1949. I, 331, II, 1085.
12. SUM-PA KHAN-PO YE CE PAL JOR, Pag sam jon zang. Ed. by Sri Sarat Chandra Das. Calcutta 1908, 139 ff.
13. R. FILCHNER, Kumbum Dschamba Ling. W. A. UNKRIG, Einführung (C.v.K. KRASINSKI, Tibetische Medizinphilosophie, 1953.)
14. JOURNAL OF THE ASIATIC SOCIETY OF BENGAL. 1903, 126.—Here the man in question is called: Nan ston khra chan pa blo gros mchog gi rdo rje. The chart as well as the Peking-copy spell the name: khra chan blo mchog rdo rje zabs.—J. SCHUBERT, rine Liste der Apta uon Kembrier. ARTIBUS ASIAE. Vol.IV—4, 220 ff, 222—223; Anm. 23.